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President's news Conf extract:

15. Covert Surveillance

Q. The Chicago Council on Foreign Relations said the American people have had their fill of covert manipulation. The Executive order you signed last week Jan. 24 provides the procedure for the N.S.C. to approve covert manipulation, and I'm wondering if the American people have had their fill of covert manipulation, why you are con-

tinuing to provide these procedures to allow it.

A. I don't believe the Executive order would permit as you call it covert manipulations. It does permit the surveillance of certain groups in the United States. The only way that an American citizen can be put under surveillance—clandestine or secret surveillance—is as a result of an order by a Federal judge with a warrant. If someone is strongly suspected of being an agent of a foreign power working against the security of our country, then with approval of the Attorney General to assure that it's a proper function and with my own approval too, that it's permitted. But that's not a departure from any past.

Q. In Section 1302 it says the S.C.C., the Special Coordination Committee, shall consider and submit to the President a policy recommendation including all the steps on each special activity; and in Section 4212 defines special activities as activities conducted abroad in support of national foreign policy objectives which are planned and executed so that the role of the United States Government is not apparent or acknowledged publicly, which seems to be a covert operation.

A. Well, covert, as you know has a meaning of nonpublicized or secret. Under any circumstances where we feel that it's necessary to have a so-called covert action of any kind overseas, then it has to be decided in the White House. The President is notified and approves it personally. The Secretary of State and the Attorney General are involved and the Congressional intelligence committees are also informed. And so this is a very careful prevention of any abuse if that should ever become necessary.